

-----Messaggio originale-----

Da: kevin galalae [<mailto:kgalalae@hotmail.com>]

Inviato: ven 22/05/2009 8.31

A: tutor.politicalphilo

Oggetto: Max Tant

Hi Giovanni,

I have the nagging suspicion that you are Max Tant. But don't worry, your secret is safe with me, as I will continue to play along for the benefit of the rest of the class. By the way, I loved your response to my objection to Plato. I tried to rise to the same standard in my reply. Let me know if I have succeeded.

Kevin

Subject: R: Max Tant

Date: Fri, 22 May 2009 17:49:25 +0100

From: tutor.politicalphilo@conted.ox.ac.uk

To: kgalalae@hotmail.com

Hi Kevin,

No I'm not Max Tant, he does exist as a real student! But I am glad that you have find his challenge stimulating!

Today I did not manage to check the course, sorry, but tomorrow I'll read carefully your reply and let you know what I think of it.

Best

Giovanni

RE: R: Max Tant

Von:

kevin galalae (kgalalae@hotmail.com)

Gesendet: Sonntag, 24. Mai 2009 16:03:21

An: Giovanni de Grandis (tutor.politicalphilo@conted.ox.ac.uk)

Hi Giovanni,

I am rather disappointed that you are not Max. If you were him I could have at least bragged that you deemed me important enough to take the time to debate me. It would have been very flattering.

The reasons I suspected you as being Max are:

1. Max has only posted twice, for Plato's argument, lesson five, and political experiences, lesson 1. A student as intelligent as Max would not take the course to fail it due to laziness or failure to fulfill the course requirements.
2. Max has a wonderfully clear mind and a keen intellect, which he uses to clarify the information posted by others in order to bring maximum benefit to the class. A student would not summarize the opponent's points with such selfless clarity or post with the intent to complete the existing discussion.
3. Max's first lengthy posting comes right after your intervention in lesson 4, when your defense of utilitarianism in the objections to utilitarianism forum, lesson 4, backfired in that it stifled further debate. So I assumed that you were trying a new strategy to direct the discussion by posting under an assumed identity.

Either way, I love having Max to tangle with. He challenges me to think and to dig deep.

I apologize for being so direct, but that is my style.

Warm regards,

Kevin

R: R: Max Tant

Von:

tutor.politicalphilo (tutor.politicalphilo@conted.ox.ac.uk)

Gesendet: Montag, 25. Mai 2009 12:04:44

An: kevin galalae (kgalalae@hotmail.com)

Hi Kevin,

I think that your explanation of why you believed that I was Max is a wonderful demonstration of how a

very clever, plausible and convincing reasoning can sometimes lead to wrong conclusions! But I enjoyed it: I really think you have a philosophical mind Kevin and that you should pursue philosophical studies after this course.

I'd love to engage more extensively with your posts, but I cannot do it for a number of reasons. One is that this would run a serious risk of turning the course into a dialogue between you and I in front of a more or less inert audience (possibly one that would keep shrinking as a consequence) -a bit like in some Platonic dialogues, you know. Another reason is that I think that it would be of great use for the other student to engage with your postings, and they will do it even less, if they knew that I will do it too extensively: that's why I try to do it a little, but not too much. An altogether different kind of reason is a question of time. This course represent more or less 10% of my weekly teaching time (I am not employed full time to work on it) and it would take me a not small amount of time to engage extensively with your reasonings. It would be exciting and challenging (and by no means easy, believe me!) but unfortunately I have responsibilities towards several other students.

But it is great that you have found Max: your exchanges -like your exchanges with Ivor- are really interesting and add a lot of depth to the course.

May I borrow some of your remarks about him, when I write his final assessment? :-)

I have already borrowed your idea of peasant mentality in discussing Berlusconi's success with some friends. It is curious because I have often had a similar thought about Italy in terms of feudal mentality (the need for having a powerful patron), but I think that your ideas is more general and useful.

Kevin, now that we have got to know each other a little more and we know that we are not ill-meaning people, let's be direct and straightforward without the need to apologize.

Have a good week

Giovanni